

Message Text

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ACTION MED-03

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FM AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2157

INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: A/MED

SUBJ: REPLACEMENT FOR EMBASSY NURSE

REF: STATE 168665

1. WHILE I APPRECIATE THE DIFFICULTY OF ASSIGNING A NURSE TO MOGADISCIO, I DO NOT RPT NOT BELIEVE A LOCAL HIREPART-TIME NURSE IS AN ACCEPTABLE ALTERNATIVE GIVEN OUR CIRCUMSTANCES HERE. MY REASONS ARE AS FOLLOWS:

2. OUR OFFICIAL FAMILY AT PRESENT NUMBERS TWENTY-FIVE ADULTS AND TWELVE CHILDREN FOR A TOTAL OF THIRTY-SEVEN. THE ACTIVE NEED FOR A NURSE IS THUS CONSIDERABLY GREATER THAN THE TWO HALF-DAYS PER WEEK CITED REFTL.

3. ALTHOUGH WE HAVE IDENTIFIED TWO AND POSSIBLY THREE WIVES OF FOREIGN DIPLOMATS WHO HAD NURSES' TRAINING SOME YEARS AGO AND WHO COULD ADMINISTER HEALTH UNIT ON PART-TIME BASIS, ALL OF THEM HAVE SIGNIFICANT OTHER RESPONSIBILITIES WHICH WOULD MAKE IT IMPOSSIBLE FOR THEM TO BE AVAILABLE SEVEN DAYS PER WEEK ON EMERGENCY BASIS.

4. NON-AMERICAN PART-TIME NURSE COULD NOT RPT NOT SATISFY SPECIAL DEMANDS OF SMALL AND ISOLATED POST. AMERICAN NURSE AS MEMBER OF MISSION ENJOYS FULL CONFIDENCE OF STAFF AND IS AVAILABLE TO DEAL WITH MED PROBLEMS, INCLUDING EMOTIONAL DIFFICULTIES, WHICH
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PROBABLY COULD NOT BE DEALT WITH OTHERWISE. GIVEN CURRENT AT-

MOSPHERE IN MOGADISCIO, IT IS NOT RPT NOT IN OUR INTERESTS TO HAVE SUCH MATTERS KNOWN OUTSIDE EMBASSY.

5. AIRLINE SERVICE OUT OF MOGADISCIO IS INFREQUENT AND OCCASIONALLY ERRATIC. IN CASES WHICH WOULD REQUIRE MED EVACUATION WE SIMPLY COULD NOT COUNT ON PART-TIME NURSE PROVIDING THE SORT OF ATTENTION DURING WAITING PERIOD NOW AVAILABLE WITH OUR STAFF NURSE.

6. VISIT OF REGIONAL MED OFFICER EVERY SIX WEEKS DOES NOT ANSWER THE DAILY PROBLEM OF LIVING IN AN ENVIRONMENT WHERE MED SERVICES ARE SCANTY OR NON-EXISTENT, WHERE MINOR DISORDERS CAN EASILY BECOME MAJOR PROBLEMS BEFORE THE PROPER DIAGNOSIS CAN BE MADE AND WHERE THERE ARE FEW SOURCES OF COUNSEL OR SUCCOR IN A GENUINE CRISIS. WHATEVER OUR NUMBERS OR THE WEEKLY MAN HOURS A NURSE MIGHT DEVOTE TO TREATING THE STAFF HERE, I KNOW OF NO YARDSTICK WHICH ADEQUATELY MEASURES THE BENEFIT THIS MISSION DERIVES FROM THE PRESENCE OF A FULL-TIME AMERICAN NURSE.

7. THERE IS ADMITTEDLY NOT MUCH WE CAN OFFER OUR STAFF IN MOGADISCIO, BUT LACK OF ANY AMERICAN MEDICAL HELP WOULD MAKE AN ALREADY DIFFICULT SITUATION WORSE.

8. IF WE ARE NOW UNABLE TO STAFF THAT POSITION THEN I THINK WE HAVE TO SERIOUSLY CONSIDER WHETHER IT CONTINUES TO BE PRUDENT FOR US TO ASSIGN COUPLES WITH YOUNG CHILDREN HERE.

9. IN VIEW OF ABOVE, I BELIEVE THAT DEPT SHOULD MAINTAIN FULL-TIME NURSE POSITION HERE AND, IF NECESSARY, SHORTEN TOUR OF DUTY TO TWELVE MONTHS.

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